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Government Clerks

A BOOK OF BALLADS

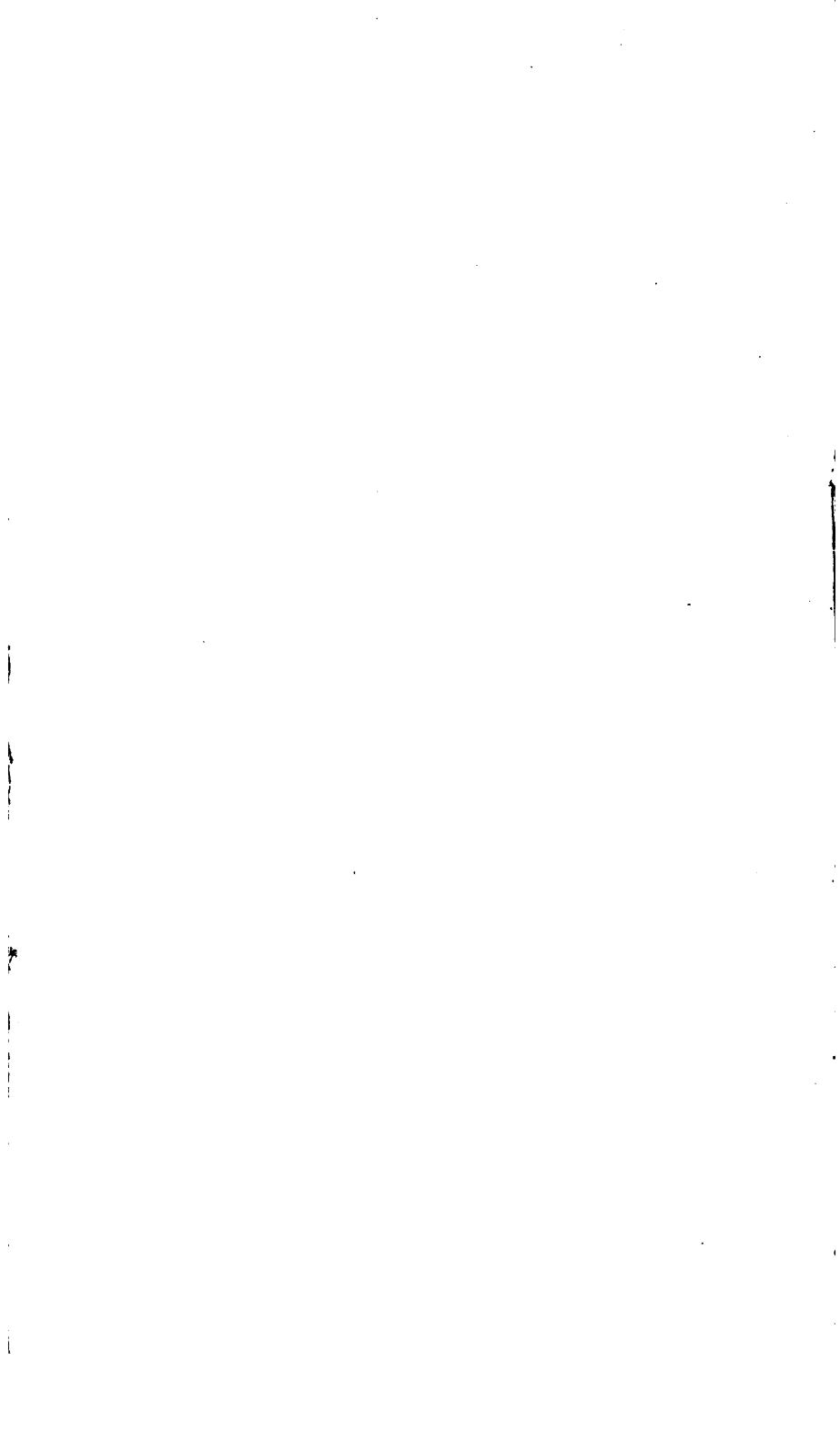
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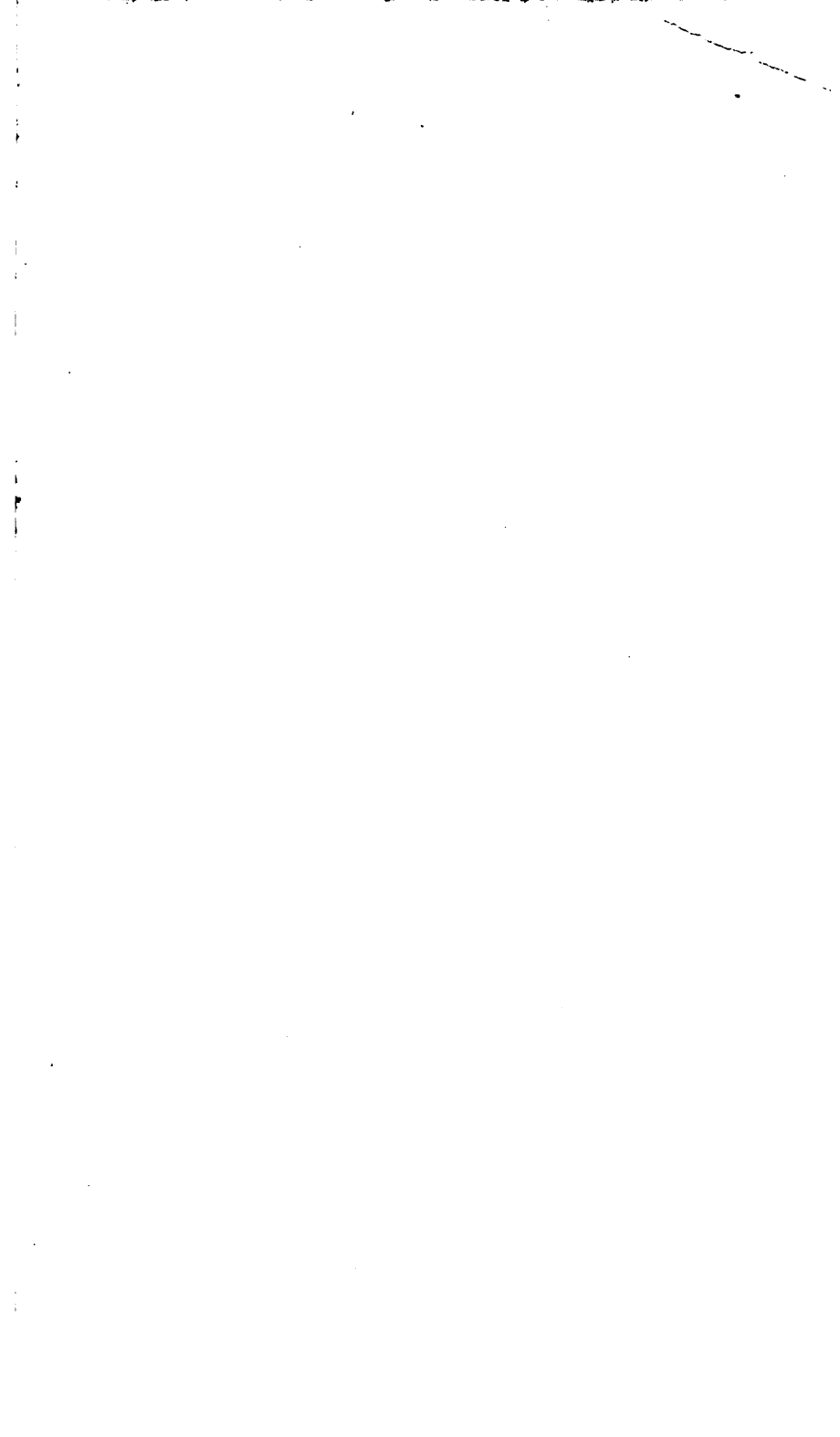




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GOVERNMENT CLERKS

A BOOK *of* BALLADS
By Charles Gordon Rogers



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We Give You

The Workaday Government Clerk.

HERE'S to the workaday government clerk,
Who does to the government's credit his
work;

Trudging each day a monotonous track,
Forward and backward and forward and back;
Pegging away at the ancient routine,—
(Much is accomplished where little is seen);
Arduous labor and technical work,—
Here's to the workaday government clerk!

Here's to the workaday government clerk,
Gray-headed, bald-headed, florid or dark;
Stoopy men, droopy men, little and big,
Work again, home again, jiggety jig!
Old in the Service or young at the game,
What are the odds if the end is the same?
Whether his hope be a flame or a spark,
Here's to the workaday government clerk!

Here's to the workaday government clerk,
Doing his best without shamming or shirk.
Whether his children or dollars increase,
Whether he asketh or holdeth his peace,
Whether he getteth promotion or (p)raise,
Doing his best to the end of his days,
Too thorough to fail and too honest to shirk,
Here's to the workaday government clerk!

Here's to the workaday government clerk!
Daily he maketh (on paper) his mark.
Whether he getteth or not what he ought,
Earning it, burning it, (comforting thought!)
Paying his debts with apportioning care,
Or banking a bit while the weather is fair,
Making each pay-day his reckoning mark,
Here's to the workaday government clerk!

THE WORKADAY GOVERNMENT CLERK.

Here's to the workaday government clerk!
The people employ him, and scoff at his work.
If he go shabby, "a miserly blade!"
If he dress well, "Ah, too well is he paid!"
His affairs unofficial are his, and alone;
He's doing your business and minding his own.
And as long as he does to your credit his work,
Here is to the workaday government clerk!



Aurelia.

AURELIA Amabel Wray
Was a typist, expert and fair;
With limpid and luminous eyes of gray,
That she used in a wonderful, wondering way,
And glorious goldene hair.

Charming Aurelia Wray
Would make a most lovable rib.
She was twenty-two on her last birthday,
(I am going by just what the blue books say),
And blue books, of course, *can't* fib.

Tender Aurelia Wray
Was soft on a clerk named Wright,
Who worked in an office across the way,
Shorthanded, and hard, at a junior's pay,
And often went back at night.

Aurelia Amabel Wray
Was vexed for a Wright good reason.
For *he* had gone wrong on Fidelia Fay,
Who "typed" for *another* department's pay,
Which was semi-official treason.

Lieutenant Aurelia Wray
Unfettered one morning's mail;
For the Secretary had Grippe that day,
And the Chief with *his* grip had been called away,—
And hangeth thereby my tale.

Suspicious Aurelia Wray
Broke the seal of a "confidential";
For the writing was feminine, fine and "Fay,"
And she had to see what *she* had to say,—
Though she knew it was not essential.

AURELIA.

Smiling Aurelia Wray

Read the note to its end—*deliter*.
And its end was ashes, and fine, and gray,
And Fidella thinks that it went astray,—
For who in the world could tell it her?

Strategic Aurelia Wray

Stole Fidella's "transfer" thunder,
And she robed herself in her best array,
And she added a blush when she called that day,
Though her own cool cheek lay under.

Smit with official delight

Was the august Head with Aurelia;
And he made a memo in black and white,
When she asked for that "transfer" to work with
Wright,
And she got it—to spite Fidella.

False, for Aurelia Wray,

Was Wright to the wronged Fidella;
And he works less hard, and for better pay,
Though he never goes back at night, they say,
For both are controlled by Aurelia.



Young Drivel

YOUNG Drivel was a C. S. clerk;
Young Drivel hated C. S. work;
That is, the work he'd *do* each day,
For which each month he drew his pay.

Young Drivel came at half-past nine;
(That is the hour he would sign);
Young Drivel left quite sharp at four;
The office did not *ask* for more.

Young Drivel hated, as I've said,
The work undone that gave him bread.
Young Drivel loved the social swim
His sinecure afforded him.

Young Drivel scanned the morning news
The social column to peruse.
Young Drivel thought it proper fame
To find in such a niche his name.

To driving party, tea, or ball,
To dinner, rout, or Rideau Hall,
Young Drivel dearly loved to go,
And deep in debt to have it so.

Young Drivel lunched at half-past one,
Like any other social gun;
Young Drivel smoked his visage green,
And sauntered back at three-fifteen.

Or if he found some pleasure call,
He would not saunter back at all.
Perhaps he'd meet some nice young ladies,
And let the office "go to Hades."

YOUNG DRIVEL.

The story in a current mag,
The glory of a current jag,
Made proper pastime, that delay
Evolved into a holiday.

Or if inclined, he'd take a cue,
(It was the only one he knew),
And idle o'er a game of pool,
(Where anglers often drown the fool).

Young Drivel met a stranger there,
He had a most distinguished air,
And, if appearances may tell,
He was a tip-top, howling swell.

Young Drivel asked—I've slipped the name—
If he would like to have a game;
And as it was but half-past two,
The kindly stranger took a cue.

Young Drivel talked, young Drivel played,
And marveled at the shots he made!
The stranger marked, and marveled, too,
And put more chalk upon his cue.

Young Drivel talked official woes,
Relating why he never rose;
And, with his wrongs before him red,
He *damned* the Departmental Head.

Young Drivel sent for cocktails, too;
The stranger smiled, and chalked his cue;
Young Drivel drank, young Drivel talked;
The sympathetic stranger *chalked*.

Young Drivel for more cocktails sent,
And raved of "pull" and "preferment."
He told some cock-and-bull tales, too;
The stranger winked and chalked his cue.

YOUNG DRIVEL.

Young Drivel did not come next day
To work; it was his little way.
He had, and so he stayed in bed,
A sort of unofficial "head."

* * * * *

Young Drivel got a letter there;
It had a large, official air:
Seal, frank, and file, and foolscap blue—
Which seemed to fit young Drivel, too.

Young Drivel's cure was past belief;
He went post-haste to see his chief;
Because that "stranger" chanced to be
Young Drivel's brand new Deputee !



Tickety-Touch.

COMING along to the time half-way,
It's a fortnight good, between
The pay-day past and the next month's pay
Of the short-in-the-hand long green;
When you haven't a dollar loaned out to a friend,
(If you had would it benefit you?)
And you haven't a bill in your pocket (to spend),
Why, *this* is the cud you chew:

Oh, it's touch! touch! touch! No matter which way
you turn,
And it's touch! touch! touch! and bills on your desk
to burn!
Whatever your pay or position, or whether you're
high or low,
Because you are "in the Service," you're a target
for Touch and Co.

It isn't the touch of your creditor, mind,
For that is a touch that goes;
He took us on trust, which was going it blind,
For fuel and food and clothes;
It isn't the touch of his calling man,
(Poor beggar, to call so much!)
It's the manifold touch on the quarter-ly plan,
The tickety-tickety-touch.

When it's touch! touch! touch! Please take some
tickets from me!
And it's touch! touch! touch! Our church is in debt.
(So are we!)
So sorry you cannot use them, you will miss the
treat of your life!
It's the money we want, and the tickets,—(Oh,
thanks!) we can sell again—to your wife.

TICKETY-TOUCH.

There's the touch of the sturdy cripples;
 (How well the poor beggars must feed!)
There's the touch of the man who tipples;
 (And werry much, sir, in need!)
There's the orphan's appeal, in verses;
 There's the man who is buying a crutch;
But the frequentest touch on the purse is
 The tickety-tickety-touch.

And it's touch! touch! touch! for tombola, bazaar
 and ball,
Where it's touch! touch! touch! and "Charity" cov-
 ereth all.
Concert and tableaux and "opera," the expenses the
 profits have hived;
But it's all for the glory of *giving*,—and the fun the
 performers derived.

There are touches, on monthly payment,
 For author and magazine;
There are peddlers of things of raiment;
 There are sellers of soaps that clean;
There are touches for loans in hallways;
 There are raffles and drawings, and such;
But the touch that abideth always
 Is the tickety-tickety-touch.

When it's touch! touch! touch! for the good of our
 Parish P.,
And it's touch! touch! touch! for a trip o'er the
 bounding sea.
A purse-ian lamb coat for the winter; and a sermon
 for those who shiver
That it's far less blessed, though warmer, to be the
 receiver than giver.

There are strawberry socials at Blankville;
 Lawn parties wherever you range;
Bazaars where the rate on a bank bill
 Is one hundred per cent *ex-change*;
There are touches in suburb and city,
 From the price of a hat to a Hutch;
So preserve us, good Lord, in thy pity
 From the infinite tickety-touch!

TICKETY-TOUCH.

**For it's touch! touch! touch! And they laugh when
you say you are broke.**

**And it's touch! touch! touch! Was there ever a jol-
lier joke?**

**Don't say that your pocket is empty, don't tell 'em
you cannot go;**

**Some friend (poor old muff!) *you* must "touch" for
the stuff—but surrender to Touch and Co.**



Richard and Robert.

THERE were two brothers who went to school,
And Dick was the scholar and Bob the fool;
Richard and Robert were brothers twain,
And Richard was known for his bulging brain.

Richard he studied hard and late,
Till he earned a third-class certificate,
And thereby money and more renown,
For he taught a school in his native town.

Then Richard he looked, and with longing eyes,
To a larger sphere and a greater prize;
And to the city one day went he
To have a shy at the C. S. E.

History, spelling, arithmetic,
Were grist at the mill of the learned Dick;
And the puzzles in grammar he saw clear through,
(Though the sort he spoke was a puzzle, too).

He passed, and his county's kind M. P.
Passed him on to Department G,
And there at the minimum third-class pay
He dreamed of a Deputyship some day.

He dreamed; but he woke to understand
That a flourishing, Capital, copper-plate hand
Was not the sort of a hand, you see,
That could help in busy Department G;

That a knowledge, no matter how deep, of "rules,"
The erudition profound of schools,
While commendable quite in a C. S. clerk,
Could have little to do with his C. S. work.

Now, Robert "the fool" (the Devil such tricks
Will play) had gone into politics;
And he pleased his Great Party so well that he
Was made Deputy M. of Department G.

Jim Potter.

THE human attribute called Pride
By varied paths may tread up;
A sort the satirists deride
By affluence is fed up.
A score unsettled Honor frets;
Deuce doubles while he damns his debts;
The while the poorer Poorboy gets,
The higher goes his head up.

Jim Potter was a modest chap,
Of fashionless pretension;
For style he did not give a rap,
Nor needed it a mention.
The fact was patent as his nose,
And copyrighted on his clothes,
From neck to knee, from top to toes,
And mocked at circumvention.

From ancient tile to battered boot
His wear to wear seemed wedded;
He daily wore the same old suit,
With trousers short and shredded.
His overcoat was threadbare-thin;
He went without a warm *within*,
And all because, from source to skin,
Though chilled, he hated credit.

His office was his daily care,
And home his hope of heaven,
For every evening found him there
Love's dower to replevin.
He was the Oberon of toys,
The god of Nursery and Noise
Among his little girls and boys,
(The heir was only seven).

JIM POTTER.

His wife was quite another sort,
And well poor Potter knew it!
She was the very Queen of Sport,
And fast did she pursue it!
She had no sympathy with Jim;
She loved the social tide and swim,
And made it Carrie Potter's whim
To daily dip into it.

She traveled in the smartest set,
And set the smartest paces;
While Potter, if he chose, might fret
Or hie to Helen Blazes.
The men all said—I have forgot—
'Twas friendly-wise, as like as not;
Fast friends she had among the lot,
And all had sung her praises.

Her goal and Mecca was each state
And fashionable function;
She served the shrine of Rich and Great
With parasitic unction.
She made her dearest Jimmy call
And sign *their* name at Rideau Hall;
Which was to gall-less Jimmy gall
And wormwood of compunction.

She dressed: her figure was the pride
Of tailloress and hero;
Gave dinners, drives, "At Homes," and tried
To entertain like Nero.
She cut, in deed, a jolly dash
Without a jolly word of cash,
Which cut poor Potter like a lash,
And drove his peace to zero.

He got into the shavers' hands,
Although he went unshaven;
Debt daily dunned with dark demands
Ill-omened as a raven.

JIM POTTER.

So retribution, riding fast
On wings of warrant, came at last,
And cast them out in spite of caste,
Without a hope of haven.

They got, through Providence, a house,
Though houseless in location;
Where Potter thought to change his spouse
By change of city-way-shun.
But mortal was her soul's disease,
For they might strip or starve or freeze,
It made no difference, if you please,
In Mrs. Potter's station.

She fawned at Fashion's frowning gates,
Though met by cut and parry;
She filled all Rideau's *open* dates,
With Tom and Dick and Harry.
Her card proclaimed her calling day,
When she "at home" to "friends" would stay,
Who, paradoxical to say,
Did and did not miscarry.

She had a parlor nine by ten;
In corners cobwebs clung there;
It served as nursery and den,
And clouds nicotian hung there.
She called it, though, their "drawing-room";
There scarce was space to swing a broom;
But do not, reader dear, assume
A broom was never swung there.

It was. For Potter Minimus
Bestrode and rode it horse-wise;
Which made that horse-hair parlor thus
Assume an aspect course-wise.
And Mrs. P. would make a "start"
By making little Potter smart—
I may not name the punished part—
The broom was wielded force-wise.

JIM POTTER.

The place was low. The fever came
To where they now resided;
And Mrs. Potter—burning shame!
To die lay down—and die did.
Now, Potter's loss was Potter's gain;
Yet plain he turned to Potter's plain;
Perhaps good fortune turned his brain,
For straight he suicided.

He lost a heaven on earth, to gain
No other, luckless fellow!
To follow her must seem a vein
Of luck extremely yellow.
Unless the Devil, as he may,
Finds *her* too warm to have her stay,
She'll greet him (Potter this will say
Reversely) with a "Hell-o!"



Superannuated.

BEHOLD in me a total wreck,
Unfit for work, yet strong enough
To feebly draw my modest check
And bank a portion of the stuff.
It seems to me but yesterday
I superannuated was;
Yet twenty years have rolled away
And still my health refutes the "cause."

I scale at fourteen stone and ten;
My chest is forty-five, at least;
I'm fifty at the waist, but then
Through *cutting down* I have *increased*.
No dreary, dull, official care,
The summer season out of town,
All time his own, and cash to spare,
Should keep a man from running down.

Old Dodson's house is next to mine—
(Though his ~~is~~ mine—he rents from me);
I see him start uptown at nine,—
That is, when I am up to see.
He's eighty-three, the blue books state,
And so his locomotion's tardy;
But faithful still, he's never late,—
A rare old conscientious card, he!

They put a muffler round his neck,
And fit him out with cap and cane;
Thus officeward he'll slowly trek,
And then at sunset home again.
They take of him the greatest care;
Too much, indeed, they cannot give;
For long as death his life will spare,
Upon his living they will live.

SUPERANNUATED.

He had a son who "went away,"
But left six helpless ones, God bless 'em!
And good old Dodson since that day
Has lived to house and feed and dress 'em.
And sometimes, when the snow falls deep,
Or streets are glass, and *that's* at zero,
The youngest girl his arm will keep
And guide the poor old tottering hero.

For years he dumbly worked away,
An "extra" without preferment;
And then, at half his current pay,
They kindly made him permanent.
His years of service thirty-three,
In two, if he is still alive,
He'll draw (God give him strength, like me)
Two-thirds, retired, at eighty-five.



The Ballad of Monsieur L'Tweeleree.

I.

THE Monsieur l'Tweeleree
Was a nob of high degree
In the l. c. days of pre-confederation;
With a genealogee
Of his early an-ces-tree
Quite commensurable with his haughty station.
His progenitor, a Gaul,
Floated over in the fall
At a period of franc (and free) invasion;
And he called himself de Guerre
Chevalier l'Pomme de Terre,
To commemorate, in brass, the grand occasion.

II.

The Monsieur l'Tweeleree,
By consanguinity—
Collateral, and votes—became elected;
And his talents were so vast,
That ere many moons were past
With a post and salaree he got connected.
Then his trouble did begin,
For from all his kith and kin
Came demands for little promised jobs belated;
In particular one John,
Who did base his claim upon
Many dozen bribes and votes impersonated.

III.

The Monsieur l'Tweeleree,
Grand Commissionaire L. C.,
Pressed the button for his private secretary;
And dictated, with an air
Of administrative care,
A reply to John's demands epistolary.

BALLAD OF MONSIEUR L'TWHEELEREE.

In a vault sepulchral, grim,
Archival, dusty, dim,
 To bring order out of chaos he could try,
Though a task indeed Augean,
Hard, incessant, Sisyphean,—
 And the secretary winked the other eye.

IV.

The Monsieur l'Tweeleree,
Grand Commissionaire, et c.,
 From his troubles took a nodding, napping rest;
And the sun, in imitation
Of that man of state and station,
 From *his* daily round was wearing to the West.
Then, from out that chamber dusty,
Damp and dismal, murky, musty.
 Came a solemn apparition, grimy, gray;
And it said: "The task diurnal,
Sir, you deemed for me eternal,
 Lo, your servant hath accomplished *in a day!*"

V.

Spake Monsieur l'Tweeleree
In an elevated key,
 And his whiskers red took fire from his rage:
Cease your bragging, blatant bellow!
Get you gone, you fool and fellow!
 Greatest blockhead, bovine, blundering, of the
 age!
Stay! he cried, I have a notion!
O digest it, dull Boeotian!
 Unto dust return where dust so long has lain;
Recreate that primal jumble,
Disarrange, unsettle, tumble(?)
 Out of order make confusion there again.

VI.

Place each archive, deed, and docket
In the packet, hole, or pocket
 That it quite forgotten filled until to-day;
Put each parchment, page, state paper

BALLAD OF MONSIEUR L'TWHEELEREE.

In its litter-all late shape or
Pay me no more calls, although you call for pay.
Set each atom, howe'er little
And impalpably a tittle,
On the spot it filled invisible before;
Hang each cobweb lacerated
Just as it had been located,
And when that is done—just mix 'em up once
more!

* * * * *

VII.

The Monsieur l'Tweeleree
Long ago, from office free,
Took a higher flight (which made another storey);
But in spite of his demise,
John the Appointee, grown wise,
Held his tongue—and place—untouched by Whig
or Tory.
Long, for labor Sisyphean
In that *stable* place Augean,
Musty, fusty, dry as dust he drew his pay;
And, for aught I know about it,
Though Chronology may flout it,
He may still be sweeping, sleeping there to-day.



The Wise Guy.

THERE was a youth in Western Ont.,
And he was wondrous wise;
He filled a Civil Service "want,"
And thought he had a prize.

His dad was grieved to see him go,
But had to be content.
"My Tom," he gravely said, "you know,
Is in the Guvverment."

And if he met a stranger from
The Capital, he'd say:
"By George! I guess you met my Tom!
He's down at Ottawa."

"The Prime-ear sent for Tom to come,
And Tom he up and went.
He's with the push down there, by gum!
He's in the Guvverment."

Now, Tom had entered on meantime
Those hardships incident
To zeal quite resolute to climb
The heights of preferment.

He came to work when dusters waved
By corridor and stair;
To be the very first, he braved
And breathed that troubled air.

While other chaps were still abed,
This conscientious clerk
Had signed the book an hour ahead
And started in to work.

THE WISE GUY.

Unselfishly he tried to do
What others tried to shirk.
And they were quite unselfish, too;
They let him do the work.

He lost the glow of health, the tan,
The vigor he had won
By working with his arms, *a man*,
Beneath the summer sun.

He lost the inward glow of health,
The suppleness of limb,
That Nature from her boundless wealth
Had given unto him.

Yet other things might still have been
That Nature had denied,
Had not his county's member in-
Considerately died.

And since the voice of Blank, M.P.,
Was now forever dumb,
Unto his C. S. appointee
Promotion did not come.

Then sudden for that appointee
The Service lost its charm,
And turned his thoughts right tenderly
Upon his father's farm.

He heard, imaginative youth!
The reapers pass again,
And saw his sister stand, like Ruth,
Amid the fallen grain.

He heard, dear immemorial sound!
The noon-time dinner call,
And soft upon the grassy ground
The early apples fall.

THE WISE GUY.

He heard the flocking blackbirds sing
Across the golden plain,
And every sweet, imagined thing
Made music in his brain.

He saw, with retrospective eyes,
Above the harvest land
The round, red harvest moon arise,
Majestically grand.

So irksome grew his office lot,
He saw the Dep. that day,
And three weeks' leave of absence got,
(And his September pay).

And now, a youth in Western Ont.
Is doubly wondrous wise.
He fills his father's only want
And *knows* he has a prize.



Stella.

MAC NAUGHTON Fairchild Buckham Lee
Was Secretary to the Chief;
Past years of service, twenty-three,
His knowledge, too, quite past belief;
That is, a useful, unofficial knowledge
Of little things he'd learned, *somehow*, at college.

He lived on Latin roots, and loved
To dig them from his dictionary;
And words quite obsolete he shoved
Into his style epistolary;
While phrases writ in foreign tongues he'd find,
Quite foreign to the lay Canadian mind.

A formidable man was Mac,—
That is, from heel and toe to shoulder;
Deep-chested, tall, and broad of back,
A sort of human bull, or boulder;
And, therefore, who so framed and fit as he
To draw at ease an ample salaree?

He had been best employed, 'tis true,
In weightier work of handling cases;
Material ones of four by two,
O. H. M. S. for various places;
Containing stationery incidental
To daily drudge, or dalliance, departmental.

But no. He toiled at Pitman's style,
And carved the pothooks of that system;
It would have made old Isaac smile
To see that clerking giant twist 'em;
Or pondering o'er some grammalogue elliptical,
And cursing its quaint curves for being cryptical.

STELLA.

It was a famous sight to see,
Above his caligraphic keys,
The burly M. F. Buckham Lee
Typewriting with undoubted ease;
Selecting with an air of loving lingering
Some coy young key to fit his forceful fingering.

And in that office day by day
There typed a maiden wise and witty;
And she was modest, like her pay,—
For she was neither pert nor pretty;
Having alone a born and bred ability
For handling correspondence with facility.

It chanced—O dark official fate!
The great MacNaughton Lee fell ill.
His medical certificate—
It cost him a two-dollar bill—
Said that he needed rest, and recommended
Three months abroad—all office care suspended.

Then to the Chief's full notice came
Miss Stella, *under* secretary.
Before, he scarce had known her name.
But ill's the wind that will not vary
Miss-fortune; so at last, sans circumvention,
Miss Stella found the Chief's deserved attention.

He found Miss Stella swiftly cast,
A star of never-falling brightness.
The correspondence ne'er amassed
Beneath alone her fingers' lightness.
And so it came to pass he ceased to wonder
How *Mac* had kept the correspondence under.

He did not marry her, although
His gain might thus have early ended;
He held the mastery sweet, and so
He held her where her talents tended.
Thus singularly doubly is he blessed;
She does the letters—Mac may do the "rest."

Jack O'Dee.

THIS is the story of Jack O'Dee,
First-class clerk in Department C,
Who made an idol of clay his wife,
Who married him not for love but *use*,
Who squandered his money in hand, and then
Ran him in debt for the eyes of men,
Who winked and wondered that man could be
As blind for an idol as Jack O'Dee.

By the grace of God was Jack O'Dee
Wifeless, and gray, at forty-three,
Wifeless, and worn with her debt's demands,
And children three on his spouseless hands,
Yet taking them oft to her grave, and there
Telling them infinite lies of her
Who lifeless as living would ever be
The idol of clay of Jack O'Dee.

This was the sum that Jack O'Dee
Did for the sake of his children three,
Did for the sake of honor and pride,
And her who had set the sum—and died:
To labor till every dollar of debt
At a hundred cents on the dollar was met,
And at last, his neck from *that* millstone free,
Was lifted the head of Jack O'Dee.

Now, this was the luck of Jack O'Dee:
Free from all debt but a day was he,
From his office table they raised his head,
And his face it was white and worn and dead.
Under his hand a letter lay,
Bearing the mark of the post that day,
And some one had left, across the sea,
Estates and a fortune to Jack O'Dee.

Gubbins.

IT came, a dream of style and state,
Of coronet and copperplate;
The envelope betokened rank,—
It bore His Excellency's frank.

It hit the gulleless Gubbins hard,
It was for him a fatal card;
The simple grandeur of its crest
Quite broke the simple Gubbins' rest.

He ordered evening dress that day,
(The price took Gubbins' breath away),
And bound himself in (k)nightly fee
Unto the fair Terpsichore.

That is, he went to dancing school,
And learned, by mathematic rule,
And honest application, how
To polka, waltz, chassé and bow.

And in that gay, gregarious whirl
He met a ripping, handsome girl,
Who daily for her needed dough
Sold lace for Remnant, Stock and Co.

So much his pleasure she enhanced,
With no one else he ever danced;
And, since her brother did not come,
He saw her after midnight home.

The eve august had come at last,
The eager Gubbins' heart beat fast.
It grieved his kindly landlayde
To see him eat so little tea.

GUBBINS.

His brand new evening clothes were spread
Like silk molasses on the bed;
And as he tried them on with care,
He careless hummed a waltzing air.

His spirits could not be repressed;
He tried a two-step while he dressed;
Rehearsing, lest he should forget,
His dancing master's etiquette.

Complete by tailor-plate and plan,
From tie to toe a new-made man,
But nervous as the deuce withal,
He started off for Rideau Hall.

Announced in clear stentorian tones,
He made his bow with shaking bones,
And wandered on in doubtful glee
To join the regal revelry.

The ballroom was, to Gubbins' sight,
A thing of wonder and delight.
The ladies' dresses—and the rest—
With ardour filled his simple breast.

He wondered by what circumstance
Of introduction he could dance,
And then,—Chance gave, it seemed, the clue,—
He saw two fellows whom he knew.

And one was Jones, and one was Brown,
No sweller fellows in the town;
And each was fellow-clerk, you see,
Of Gubbins in Department G.

But though he'd talked with them that day
In office in a friendly way,
They drew the line at Rideau Hall,—
They did not know him now at all.

GUBBINS.

Perhaps you will recall that G
Had eaten very little tea;
So, more to view it than consume,
He wandered to the supper-room.

Now, Gubbins was a frugal sort;
Gastronomy was not his forte;
And that which met his modest sight
Quite spoiled his gentle appetite.

With clothes awry and faces flushed,
Men jostled, shouldered, elbowed, pushed.
It was (although the figure's tame),
A sort of hand-and-foot-ball game.

"Two salads here!" "A glass of wine!"
"Confound you, waiter, that is mine!"
"Three ices!" "Coffee!" "Quick, a jelly!"
(God of all gods, thou Human Belly!)

Coffee, wine, cup, and all the rest o't,
Were spilled on gown and coat and waistcoat;
And broad (shirt) bosoms bore away
Mementoes of that mortal fray.

But sudden clear above the noise
Was heard the high vice-regal voice,
Assuring those within the hall
That there was food enough for all.

Then Gubbins saw to his surprise
Emerging, but triumphant-wise,
From out that press of brawn and bones
The noble forms of Brown and Jones.

They joined two ladies sitting by,
And Gubbins' calmly curious eye
Grew sudden bright with interest, too,—
The girls were girls that Gubbins knew.

GUBBINS.

The daughters of the kind M. P.
Who got him in Department G,—
He took, through courtesy, a chance
To ask the eldest girl to dance.

She gave him, with a frigid stare,
The shoulder cold—as well as bare;
And, taking pattern from her gown,
She “cut” his aspirations down.

Then Gubbins sought the open air,
Where he could calmly think—and swear.
He called himself a curséd fool,
And wished himself in—dancing school.

Bright thought! To see his single fair,
He double paid to hurry there.
He found the charmer that he sought,
And saw her home at twelve-three-nought.



Diaphanous Day.

MAUDE Madolin Knight and Diaphanous Day
Were birds of official feather;
They were parallels in a clerklly way,
(Except in the trifles of work and pay),
And wrote in one room together.

That is, Day worked by her each day
That Madolin Knight was clerking;
But he worked by night deprived of "K,"
For she never worked by night by Day,
As she ridiculed over-working.

Maude Madolin Knight a thousand drew,
With a yearly increase of fifty;
Six hundred per annum to Day was due,
And *he* got a yearly increase, too,—
For his wifey was never thrifty.

Now, Maude though plain was plump, and the page
Of her years was but thirty-seven;
And the trifling difference of work and wage
Should have been o'erlooked, at Diaphanous' age,
To live in that clerking heaven.

But daily more dark Diaphanous' view
Became of his sordid, sad lot;
And he thought of the bills that were always due,
(While plumper Miss Maude and her savings grew),
And the wherewithal that he had not.

And he framed by night with a hopeful hand,
Long pleadings epistolary;
Would the Deputy press his just demand
When the Estimates were being planned?
And the Deputy murmured, "Nary! "

DIAPHANOUS DAY.

Then he sought the long (long suffering) ear
Of the Private Secretary.

Would the *Minister* not incline to hear
His claim for *something*, at least, this year?
And the Minister murmured, "Nary!"

And said, in an incontrovertible way,
(For the hint was more kind than subtle),
"There are scores of men in my riding, Day,
Who are pressing me for your post and pay."
And what had old Day in rebuttal?

But Fate, in a manner exceeding grim,
Brought Day his deferred promotion.
And his cup was filled to the bitter brim
When the Grippe took his family all from him,
And left him alone on Life's ocean.

There came to the Minister's room, they say,
A plain and substantial vision.
"I am going to marry Diaphanous Day,"
She said, "so you have to increase his pay,
And give him a nice position!"

The Minister smiled, and inclined his head,
And his voice it was bland and mellow.
"It shall be as you wish, my dear," he said.
"For I've always thought that the man you'd wed
Would be a *deserving fellow!*"



Punctual.

I COME most regular at Eight,
My punctuality's unswervin';
I'm sure I do not wish to prate,
But still my record's most deservin'.
While others come at half-past nine,
It's always bin my great ambition
To be the Very First to Sign
The Book, an' *hold* that high position.

The offices an' corridors
Is owned, when I arrive, by ladies,
A-mopping of the stairs and floors,
An' generally raisin' Hades.
So, seein' there's no room for me
To work (if I'd the *ink*lination),
I turn my steps regretfully
Unto my *other* destination.

I've got the marketin' to do,
An' if the mornin's fine and sunny,
It's pleasant, an' it's payin', too,
When you've a little ready money.
I like to nose around, an' find
The price o' meat an' truck and so on.
There's money saved, if you've a mind
To spare the time, an' cash to go on.

By nine, unless I get a ride,
With all that I can carry handy
I foot it home. I've no false pride,
I ain't no "Rideau calling" dandy.
An' maybe, half-way home, I'll meet
Some fellows to the office dawdlin',
Who grin like fools across the street,
An' air their witticisms maudlin.

PUNCTUAL.

"What! workin' extra for the Chief?
"He's ruined, if it's by the hour.
"An' what's the price of lamb an' beef,
"An' cabbage, corn, an' cauliflower?
"But won't he let you 'cab it' there?
"I'm sure the Auditor would pass it.
"Contingency of travelin' fare,
"Account of *Maintenance*, he'd class it."

At twelve, quite punctual, as is due
To family rules, I'm off to dinner.
I try to be on time there, too,
An' regularly I'm a winner.
Then, after dinin' at my ease,
A nap, a gossip with my neighbor,
An' smoke, as punctual as you please
I'm off again to office labor.

I'm through quite punctual at four.
But sometimes, without provocation,
Just as I've closed my office door,
Some clerk will want "some information."
And I just give him some, you bet!
"Young man," I says, "I give you warnin',
I've *reg'lar* hours; an' don't forget
I signed the Book at Eight this mornin'!"



Tapeley.

O H, listen while I tell
The tale of Mr. Tapeley.
He was a nice young swell,
So slender-wise and shapely.
In cloth and cut his guise
Was paralleled by no man;
And in the choice of ties
He showed a hand quite Roman.

I do not really know
The Romans ever wore 'em.
I'm very certain, though,
That one chap did before 'em.
Bad Absalom, 'tis writ,
Beneath an oak to pass thought;
Got neck-tied up by it,
Which made a knotty Ascot.

T. had a nice fat sit,
Though slenderly he filled it.
Instead of warming it,
His cheek untimely chilled it.
He toiled an office in
Of Departmental working,
And monthly drew his tin
For his diurnal clerking.

Unto the favored few
His manners were punctilious;
Unto the common crew
His air was supercilious.
If calling, you might wait
Or hie away to Hades,
While Tapeley chose to prate
Per telephone to ladies.

TAPELEY.

Young Tapeley got in there
By proximate exertion;
Young Tapeley's efforts were
Phlegmatically tertian.
Old Tapeley's fluency
And ink-well bagged the bounty
Of Y. R. Pull, M. P.
For Mecca Valley County.

There to that office came
One day a woolly stranger;
He did not know his name,
But Tapeley murmured, "Granger!"
His garb was gray, and bagged;
His beard was long and limber;
No nob, although he tagged
A knobby piece of timber.

In gruff, unfettered tones
He asked for Mr. Tapeley;
Which made young Tapeley's bones
Mandibular go gapely.
The clerks slipped off to where
They haw-hawed to a hiccough;
And left young Tapeley there
His wandered wit to pick up.

The stranger wanted such
A lot of information;
And questioned very much,
To Tapeley's consternation.
Our imports, duties, trade,—
Of such his talk abounded,
While Tapeley's answers made
Confusion worse confounded.

The knowledge he essayed
To show was past perplexing;
His tongue likewise betrayed
A rudeness largely vexing;

TAPELEY.

Until at last the gent,
So seemingly agrarian,
In indignation went
To see the Secretary 'un.

Dear Reader (I invest
My tale with this assumption),
The "stranger" you have guessed,
With all a reader's gumption.
Yet—do not be surprised—
I, too, was wrong, between us.
It was not, as surmised,
That Mecca Vale Maecenas.

Oh, no! He was a wig
Of academic luster;
A sage in science big
As any school could muster.
His titular degree
Was syllabic and splendid;
An abecedary
Of sapience suspended.

A man of letters he,
Beyond the scope of stanza;
To tell a tithe would be,
Or seem, extravaganza;
B. C., A. D., D. V.,—
My metre loth must lop 'em;
P. S. and F. O. B.,
And BARONET to top 'em.

And that is—*entre nous*—
Why Tapeley was 'retired';
Moreover, P. D. Q.,
Though Pull his protest wired.
Experience his head
Inherits—*dura mater*.
Meanwhile he eats the bread,—
A cottage loaf—of Pater.

Double Foolscap.

O H, I am a marginal waste of white!
Or blue, as the case may be;
On which, in the middle, the clerks may write,
In the middle precise of me.
And then with a number, address, and date,
(For to such is my chiefest claim),
A messenger carries me forth in state,
And the Great Man signs his name!

Then forth I go to the farming man,
Or My Lord, as the case may be;
And each, according unto his plan,
Most solemnly taketh me.
"Mayhap 'tis a gracious deed of land,"
Is the sanguine farmer's prayer;
And he openeth me with an eager hand,
And straightway he readeth there:

"Dear Sir: The Department of P. D. Q.
Begs to acknowledge receipt
Of a letter lately received from you,
(It was written on half a sheet!)
And this Department desires to say,
Without any equivocation,
That the subject of yours shall without delay
Have every consideration."

Then the farmer he smiteth my face in rage,
And he rends me in twain, and then
On the half of the half of my blank back page
He writes with a rusty pen:
"Dear Sirs: Your Department I have to thank
For the present of stationeree,
But a good deal less paper, and none of it blank,
Would be more to the point to me!"

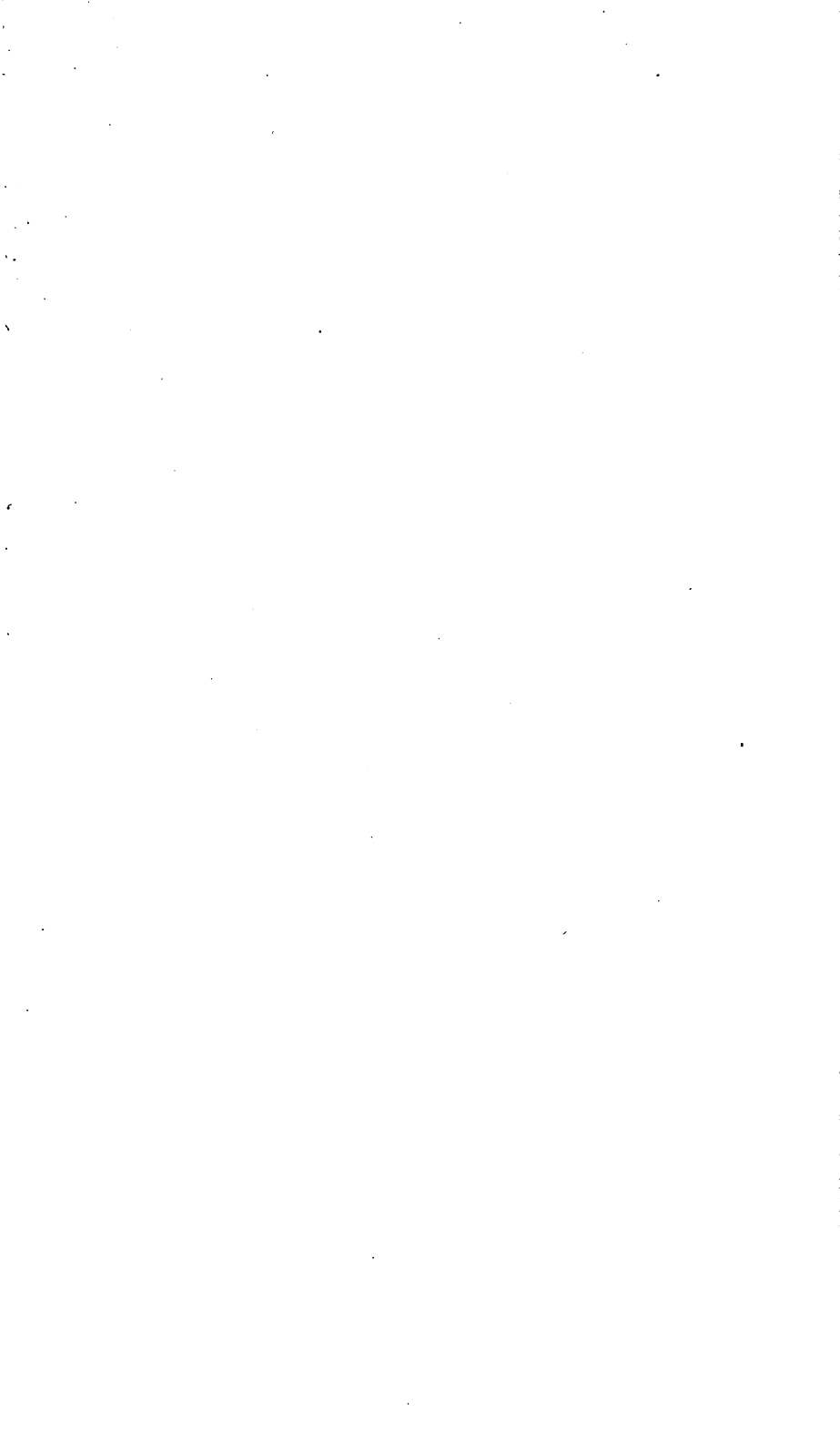
DOUBLE FOOLSCAP.

My Lord he beholdeth my lordly crest,
Yet seemeth nothing to care he;
For he passeth me on with the common rest
To his Private Secretary.
And the Secretary, as one who signs
A warrant for some one's head,
Writeth "File" in large letters across my lines,
And this message is filed unread:

"My Lord: I have the honor to state,
For your Lordship's information,
There has been received upon this date
Your Lordship's communication.
And if, My Lord, I may say it again,
I have but to add one word,
That I have the honor to humbly remain
Your obedient servant, My Lord."









MJ.

